



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



## JANUARY TRAIL WORK PARTY

The next Trail Blazers work party will be held **January 17, 2004** on the **Chumash Trail**. Meet at the trailhead on Flanagan Drive at **8:00 AM**. Please be on time as we will be carpooling up the Rocky Peak Fire Road to access the upper trailhead.

Planned work includes clearing numerous slides across the trail (the slides consist of a non-clumping dirt/ash mix) as well as a major effort to repair a damaged section of the trail where a rock retaining wall will be needed. As a result of the fire, black ash and charcoal covered branches are almost everywhere. You will get dirty, so be sure to wear old clothes.

We will work from **8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair  
John Sabol



## RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out? We still have short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweat shirts in assorted sizes and colors. Prices are:

- short sleeve \$12
- long sleeve \$14
- sweat shirt \$18

Please call Marty if you'd like to place an order: 805-526-4414.

## RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be held at the Community Center

Room B-1  
1692 Sycamore Drive  
at 7:00 PM  
on

Wednesday January 21, 2004

## DECEMBER TRAIL WORK PARTY

We completed clearing the Mt. McCoy Trail during our work party on December 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a nice cool cloudy day and although we could see it raining across the valley to the north, we only received a little misting.

We brought out our gas powered brush cutter and I trained Mike Kuhn on the units' operation and safety rules for use. Mike and I each worked half of our time with the cutter and finished the upper half of the trail with far less effort than was needed to clear the bottom section during the previous work party. We now have two people trained in brush cutter use.

We dug out rocks sticking up in the trail, dug out brush on the trail edge and lopped shrubs that were growing out into the trail. A lot of trash was also gathered from under the Oak trees from what seemed to be an old homeless camp. We carried all trash out to our vehicles. We again had to block off several trail shortcuts. Lazy hikers are reopening and continuing to use these illegal trails. After the work party we met at Baja Fresh for lunch.

Many thanks to the following workers:

Jodene Downey, Tom Frye, Mike Kuhn, Linda Travis, Tom Travis and John Sabol.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Bruce Adams & Sylvia Fowler  
Carrie, Bobby, and Mitchell Law  
Kurt Dahlgren**

## FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT IN 1974

When I moved here in 1974, with my wife, Hannah, and son, David (3 years old), there was much to do for entertainment. On some summer evenings we would go to the vacant parcel on the northern side of Cochran Street east of Stow Street and watch the cowboys lasso steers. Yes, good family entertainment and it didn't cost anything. I guess we all miss some parts of the good old days.

Mike Kuhn



*China Flat hike, left to right: Chuck Portoghesi, Margarita Marsh, Arlene Altshuler, and Gary Cremeans.*

## MORE ON THE TOMOL

The *tomol* usually had a three man crew. Six men (all relatives of the owner) carried the *tomol* into the surf. The crew included two paddlers and one person in the center for bailing. The bailer was normally a hired hand and performed a very important function, for bailing was nearly a continuous operation. The bailer, of course, would paddle if bailing services were not needed at the moment.

Surface fishing was for albacore, bonito and other surface feeders. Baited gouge lines and composite lures, usually of shells were used. The brown pelican was the dream helper of fishermen who specialized in surface fishing. It is likely that the examples of carved stone pelicans which have been found as grave goods may have belonged to these specialized fishermen. Bottom fishing was done for sheephead, rockfish, and halibut using curved baited shell hooks. The cormorant was the dream helper for those fishermen. Fishermen also employed seine nets, which were dragged between two boats, dip nets (ground up cactus was used as chum to attract sardines), and gill nets. Harpoons were used to take black sea bass, tuna, swordfish, and sea mammals. Open water fishing was done year round, but less so during the winter months when the sea was rough. Fishermen carried carved miniature steatite or wooden boats as charms - many of which have been found as grave goods.

Boat owners knew the currents and the winds. During the summer months, for example, a fisherman could set out from *Muwu* (Mugu) at 4:00 a.m. and take advantage of a land breeze, which would blow towards the southwest - towards the islands. By late morning a sea breeze, i.e., blowing from the sea onto the shore, would have come up, and it would have been time to return to shore. By midday, it would not have gotten to be so strong as to present a danger to the fisherman. If

you were still out at sea by late afternoon, the sea might be too heavy and dangerous. Fishermen would make a dash to the shore whenever strong winds came up. Santa Ana winds and southeasterlies were considered especially dangerous. Journeys to the islands also began in the early morning hours, using the land breeze to carry the *tomol* and its precious cargo to an island by mid-morning. Starting at *Muwu*, they would head directly for Anacapa Island. Along the northern shoreline of Anacapa Island a westerly current would take them to Santa Cruz Island. A return to *Muwu* usually began as soon as the wind turned, so that landfall could be had by mid-afternoon. The westerly current was avoided on the return trip by initially heading more directly to the north. Boat owners knew the currents and the winds. Otherwise, they would be lost to the sea.

Cargo and passenger *tomols* could carry 10-12 people or up to a thousand pounds of cargo. Trade to the islands included various seeds, acorns, and bows and arrows. Trade from the islands included chipped stone tools, fishbone beads, shell beads, baskets, digging stick weights, driftwood for boat building, brea cakes, abalone, and sea otter pelts.

The *tomol* is described as agile and swift. Trips to Santa Cruz Island from Hueneme took about three and one half hours, i.e., about seven (7) miles per hour. The Chumash traveled between Santa Cruz Island and San Nicolas Island - a journey of 42 miles. They did not generally travel at night, although those occasional trips to San Nicolas Island must have required night travel.

Mike Kuhn



## FROM THE ORIGINAL PROSPECTUS FOR SIMIOPOLIS

A description of Simi Valley from the late-1880s prospectus for the California Mutual Benefit Colony of Chicago's Simiopolis:

*Although Southern California can boast of many magnificent valleys, with soils that will produce almost everything that can be grown in either hemisphere, and climate unexcelled on the globe, it is claimed by those who have familiarized themselves with all portions of the state, that there are none that will excel, either in soil or climate, that of the famous Simi Valley in Ventura county. The average temperature is about 58 degrees, and it is delightfully cool and pleasant in summer, and free from frosts in winter. The soil is rich and inexhaustible. Mr. J.P. Cutler, a successful farmer, who has lived in that neighborhood over eighteen years, writes that the soil is over 30 feet deep and as GOOD AT THE BOTTOM AS AT THE TOP. In fact anything that can be grown in any part of California, can be grown here. More than this could not be said of any country. For grapes, figs, walnuts, olives and deciduous fruits, it can not be excelled in the state. The water facilities are the very best, and the cost of obtaining flowing artesian well, only 60 feet deep, and the Simi Co. are now sinking wells in other parts of the valley. Springs are abundant, and the canyons in the surrounding mountains have an abundant supply of water, and offer an easy method of supplying the adjacent valleys. The dip of the strata in the surrounding mountains, show that the water drain is towards the valley, and the fact that flowing wells can be obtained at 60 feet, while on the other side of the mountains wells have been sunk 1,000 feet, without success, proves it beyond all question.*

Mike Kuhn

## SPANISH UNDER ATTACK IN 1820

The late-18th Century witnessed the movement into Alta-California by peoples from Mexico representing Spanish culture in the new world. The initial justification of the Spanish invasion and settlement of coastal California was the protection from the Russians and English of the Manila galleon trade. Occupation quickly led to the demise of the Amerindian culture and their massive die-off. Still, the military presence in California related more to concern over foreign interests in California than in concern about the safety of the new settlers in the presence of the native population.

In 1816, in response to the threat from a French pirate, the residents of Spanish ranchos were asked what help they might provide for the defense of the coastal settlements. The Pico family in Simi responded that there were three able-bodied men and one *invalido*, with one lance, one sword and one musket. While armed, the residents of Rancho Simi did not seem to harbor much concern about their own safety at the hand of the Chumash Indians, whom they employed.

In 1819 a band of Mojave Indians from the Colorado River ventured to the Ventura area on a trading mission. Following an altercation, ten (10) Mojaves, two (2) soldiers and one mission Indian were killed. The Mojaves raided livestock on their return to the Colorado River settlements. There followed much concern over possible reprisals by the Mojave.

The year 1820 witnessed much unrest among Indian populations in general. Indians within the mission system were hostile because of the restrictions placed upon by the good fathers of the church, including the general third class social status in which they found themselves. Floggings as a form of discipline were common. Indians regularly ran away, generally moving to areas outside of the reach of the mission system - such as the San

Joaquin Valley. Indians outside of the mission system had a great deal of trouble dealing with the Spanish presence. The mission and rancho lands were filled with cattle and sheep and equines, which seemed free for the taking. Punitive actions were taken in response to those raids.

In 1820 a band of marauding *Kumia* (*Kimeyaay*) from Baja California attacked and burned the Simi Adobe. There is no indication that Chumash Indians on the rancho in any way participated in the attack. The adobe was immediately rebuilt and reoccupied by the Picos.

Mike Kuhn

## EFFECT OF GLOBAL WARMING ON WATER MANAGEMENT IN CALIFORNIA

Global warming is a reality. At least a major portion is of anthropogenetic origin, i.e., the cumulative effects of rising greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. This last summer a major ice shelf broke away from Antarctica and is drifting north into warmer waters – the sea level is rising and is expected to continue to do so. Antarctic sea ice is thinning rapidly and temperatures in the Arctic and temperate regions are rising. Glaciers in the Sierra Nevada are steadily dissipating.

Warmer north Pacific waters have resulted in a steady trend towards increased precipitation in the Sierras – yes, more water for California. However, more of the precipitation is coming in the form of rain. In the past, heavy winter snow packs have melted slowly in the spring and into the summer. The reservoirs in the canyons of the lower and middle slopes of the Sierras have generally been adequate to store the bulk of the runoff because throughout the spring and summer enough water has been let out to supply our cities and farms. Now, more of the precipitation comes in the form of rain, the runoff of which quickly fills the reservoirs to

overflowing and less precipitation is stored in the mountains in the form of snow pack. The effect is that the increased precipitation and reduced winter snow pack have resulted in less, not more, water being available for man's use. More of the water flows into the Pacific Ocean. All of this comes when the demand for water in California continues to rise.

Unfortunately for the environment, the answer is more storage reservoirs and a more aggressive strategy of storing surplus water underground. In Ventura County, we have begun a program to store some 300,000 acre-feet of water underground as a hedge against periodic droughts. By comparison, Bard Reservoir, which is located just west of Wood Ranch, holds a bit less than 10,000 acre-feet of water.

Our water management strategies in California will undergo many adjustments over the next several decades and centuries. Perhaps we are too successful as a species for the good of our planet.

Mike Kuhn



*Los Robles hike, left to right: Arlene Altshuler, Chuck Portoghesi, and Paulina.*



# January

## 2004



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b> <i>Happy birthday</i> <i>Gabe Sende</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Ahmanson Ranch</b> <b>Exploratory</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>4</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>4pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <i>Happy birthday</i> <i>Tom Siebert</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Long Cyn to</b> <b>Simi Peak</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>11</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>4pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <i>Happy birthday</i> <i>Eli-Ane Phillip-Minks</i>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>Work Party</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>18</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>4pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>RSTB Meeting</b> <b>See Page 1</b>	<b>22</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Calabasas Peak</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>25</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>4pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>30</b> <i>Happy birthday</i> <i>Daniel DeGoey</i>	<b>31</b> <b>Mishe Mokwa</b> <b>See Schedule</b>



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

## Hiking Schedule



- January 1 Thursday Evening Hike**  
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- January 3 Ahmanson Ranch Exploratory Hike**  
Explore the new Ahmanson Ranch area. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Wear boots, bring bug juice, snack, and 2 - 3 quarts of water.
- January 4 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- January 8 Thursday Evening Hike**  
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- January 10 Long Canyon to Simi Peak**  
Strenuous 9 MRT with 1300' elevation gain/loss. Directions: take 118 Fwy to First Street exit. Take First Street south (it becomes Long Canyon Rd) approx. 4 miles, until it intersects Wood Ranch Pkwy. Meet at 8:30am at the intersection of Long Canyon Rd and Wood Ranch Pkwy. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.
- January 11 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- January 15 Thursday Evening Hike**  
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- January 17 Chumash Trail Work Party**  
Help maintain one of the most traversed trails in Simi Valley. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan. We will be working from 8am – noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves, to work on the trail.
- January 18 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- January 22 Thursday Evening Hike**  
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- January 24 Calabasas Peak**  
Strenuous 4 – 8 MRT hike. Steep 2 mile one-way with 950' elevation gain/loss to the peak, with a possible extra 2 mile one-way with 550' elevation loss detour into Red Rock Canyon. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 -3 qts. of water and snack, bug juice.
- January 25 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- January 29 Thursday Evening Hike**  
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- January 31 Circle X Ranch - Mishe Mokwa Trail to Sandstone Peak**  
Moderate 7 MRT hike with 1500' elevation gain/loss. See a wide variety of vegetation, spectacular rock formations, and the highest peak in the Santa Monica Mountains. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 8am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 qts. of water and lunch, wear boots.

**For more information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.**

**Special Note:** - On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains.

**RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS**

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345, WK (805)583-6776
TREASURER:	PETER ELY	HM (805) 523-1409
SECRETARY:	DAVID WAGNER	HM (805) 577-5931
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WORK PARTIES CHAIR:	JOHN SABOL	HM (805) 583-2541
HIKING CHAIR & WEBSITE:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735
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PUBLICITY CHAIR:	URSULA CHRISTIE	HM (805) 527-5338
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	BRUCE SEVERY	HM (805) 526-1831

-----cut out and return with your payment-----

**MEMBERSHIP**

Please enroll me as a New ( ) or Renewing ( ) member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of:

Single.....\$10                      Family..... \$15

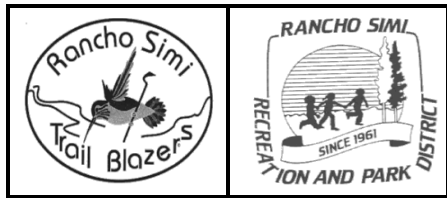
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Mo. \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_

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How did you find out about the RSTB \_\_\_\_\_

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:  
“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630399, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399  
Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



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